

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 9456

FOR NEA/ARN, NEA/IRN, AND D/HA

EO 11652C GDS
TAGS: SHUM, IZ, IR
SUBJ: KURDISH SITUATION IN IRAN AND IRAQ

REF: A. STATE 248900, B. TEHRAN 3677

1. EMBOFFS HAVE SPOKEN WITH FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS WHO WORK ON KURDISH REFUGEE PROGRAM AND WITH UN OFFICIAL WHO ASSISTS UNHRC REPRESENTING UN ELEMENTS OF PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO CONTACT BARZANI DIRECTLY BUT IF CONTACTED BY KDP REP, WE WILL EXPLORE CHARGES CONTAINED IN REF A ON DISCREET BASIS. SO FAR THERE APPEARS TO BE LITTLE HARD INFORMATION IN THEM TO CHECK OUT.

2. BASICALLY THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE IN KURDISH REFUGEE SITUATION SINCE THAT PORTRAYED EARLIER IN YEAR (REF B). WHAT APPEARS TO BE NEW IS BARZANI ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT USG CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AS WAY OF GETTING SUPPORT, AT FIRST HUMANITARIAN, PERHAPS THEN POLITICAL. WHAT FOLLOWS IS UPDATED DESCRIPTION OF REFUGEE PICTURE BASED ON OFFICIAL GOI AND UN INFORMATION.

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3. KURDISH REFUGEES CURRENTLY NUMBER BETWEEN 30,000 AND 32,000 SPREAD OUT OVER IRAN EXCEPT IN AREAS NEAREST IRQI BORDER. GOI MOVED ALL KURDISH REFUGEES OUT OF BORDER AREAS FOLLOWING MARCH 1975 ACCORDS WITH IRAQ. IRANIAN RED LION AND SUN SOCIETY (IRLS IS IRANIAN EQUIVALENT OF RED CROSS) HAS FINANCED LARGEST PORTION OF DIRECT PAYMENTS TO KURDS. REFUGEES RECEIVE FOOD AND UNEMPLOYMENT

PAYMENTS FROM IRLS AND ARE ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICAL CARE SERVICE THROUGH THAT ORGANIZATION AS WELL. IRLS SPENT ABOUT NINE MILLION DOLLARS IN DIRECT PAYMENTS TO REFUGEES FOR YEAR RUNNING MARCH 76-MARCH 77. MFA INDICATES EXPENDITURES PROBABLY RUNNING AT ABOUT THE SAME RATE THIS YEAR. IN ADDITION TO THIS, GOI MINISTERIES ARE MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES WHICH LOOK INTO KURDISH PROBLEMS AS THEY ARISE.

4. NEITHER EMBASSY NOR UNHCR HAVE ANY EVIDENCE THAT GOI HAS PRACTICED FAMILY SEPARATION. MFA OFFICIALS STATE CATEGORICALLY THEY KNOW OF NO CASES OF DELIBERATE FAMILY SEPARATION, ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT ADULTS HAVE BEEN RESETTLED AND THE FAMILY LAGGED BEHIND.

5. IT IS GOI POLICY TO INTEGRATE IRAQI KURDS VOLUNTARILY. BOTH UN AND GOI BELIEVE VAST MAJORITY OF KURDS ARE REASONABLY CONTENT WITH EXCEPTION OF ONE OR TWO THOUSAND MISFITS WHO WEEM UNWILLING TO HOLD JOBS OR SETTLE DOWN. EVEN KURDISH REPRESENTATIVES HAVE INDICATED THERE ARE THOSE WHO FIND SETTLEMENT IN IRAN DIFFICULT BUT WHO DO NOT WISH TO RETURN HOME. IRANIANS MAKE POINT THAT REFUGEE PROGRAMS PICKED OFF THE BEST OF THE KURDISH INTELLECTUALS AND PROFESSIONAL MEN FOR IMMIGRATION TO WESTERN COUNTRIES, LEAVING IRAN WITH THE LESS-EDUCATED REMAINDER, MANY OF THEM ILLITERATE. SOME DISTRICT GOVERNORS HAVE SHOWN IMPATIENCE OVER THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS
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WITH KURDISH FAMILIES WHO DO NOT WISH TO WORK BUT WANT TO CONTINUE ON RELIEF. UNHCR HAS TRIED TO RELOCATE DIFFICULT CASES BUT HAS NOT ALWAYS BEEN SUCCESSFUL.

6. GOI IS FIRMLY AGAINST FORCED REPATRIATION OF KURDS TO IRAQ, THOUGH IT IS WILLING TO MAKE RADIO AND OTHER FACILITIES AVAILABLE TO IRAQIS WHO WISH TO BROADCAST REAPRIATION APPEALS TO THEIR COUNTRYMEN. MOST RECENT EXAMPLE OF THIS WAS IN FALL 1976 WHEN IRAQI MINISTER HASSAN ALI VISITED IRAN AND SPOKE TO IRAQI KURDISH GROUPS HERE, URGING THEM TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF AMNESTY OFFERED BY IRAQI GOVERNMENT.

7. GOI OFFICIALS SOMEWHAT ANNOYED AT BARZANI EFFORTS TO STIR UP TROUBLE ON THIS ISSUE. MFA FIRST DIVISION CHIEF DAVOUDI DESCRIBED BARZANI AS A MAN WHO CONSIDERS HIMSELF A FATHER TO HIS PEOPLE-- "IF A KURD COUGHS, BARZANI TREMBLES." IRANIANS AWARE BARZANI WOULD LIKE FEW THINGS BETTER THAN TO BREAK UP IRAN-IRAQ AGREEMENT ACCORDS. IDRIS BARZANI SAID AS MUCH TO EMBOFF IN JUNE 1977.
SULLIVAN

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NNN

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